

Storm Recap

Well, that was something. Start by saying that it just stopped snowing at Blue Canyon at 21Z (1pm local time Monday 1/7), after nearly 3 days.

In fact, other than a break from about 6–8pm last night, it snowed at Blue Canyon ever since the changeover from rain to snow occurred on Friday at 2:35pm. Prior to that, it was a nasty, rainy, and windy.

News live shots were criticizing the late arrival of snow, wondering why it was raining. That snow level just took a little longer to drop, but it did! The snow started about an hour after a 63mph wind gust took out NOAA/HMT's research radar deployed at Blue Canyon at about 1:30pm. Then it snowed for basically 3 days straight.

Around 11am Friday, when the peak of the storm was blasting through Sacramento, taking the power with it, there were at least 20 different kinds of advisories out across the state. These ran the gamut from High Wind Warning, to Blizzard Warning, to Flash Flood Watch, to Avalanche Warning! And each of those 20 types covered multiple areas and zones.

No area of the state was exempt.

Two systems impact CA this week; more for Northern and Central California, than southern. One is on Tuesday, the other Thursday, with north coast onset a half a day or so earlier. The 80/50 cutoff is a reasonable approximation for the second system, however it has more moisture available than the first. We'll see what that brings. For now, forecast rain amounts Tuesday are for 1–2" across the northern half of the state higher elevations, a quarter to three quarters of an inch valley and coastal locations. Gusty north coast winds are likely tomorrow, as well as coastal mountain regions all the way to SFO. The snow level will be between 4,000' and 5,000'.

Okay, here are the boosts we've had the last few days. Remember, another couple waves slide across this week, so amounts will continue to climb. At least until the ridge builds in this weekend. Then we may be left alone for quite a while.

(I wish I could include tables, or even tabs that worked properly. But this is a plain text email, sent through a rather clunky mail server.

When I make nice lists, it loses the carriage returns. And if I create tabs, they get off whack, and I can't check during the conversion. So, bear with me.)

Before the storm, the 8 Station index was at 12.0"; 66% of average for the season. As of this morning, it's up to 89% of average, with 17.6".

This was a better 'snow' storm than 8 station precip index would indicate, however. With the most impressive orographics over the Southern Sierra, our snowpack saw a great surge. At the first of the year (near Jan. 2), our statewide percent of normal for

snow water equivalence was 60% by sensor, and 60% as course-measured at Phillips on Highway 50, near Sierra at Tahoe. This morning, we've about doubled those numbers. Here's the breakdown for percent of average to date across the Sierra:

(Inches eq.)	Jan. 1 (Inches eq.)	Jan. 7
Northern 13"	64% 7"	112%
Central 13"	53% 6"	101%
Southern 12"	69% 6"	131%
Statewide 13"	60% 6"	111%

As for individual locations, here are some storm-total snow figures gathered from the National Weather Service, and Steve Johnson: Kirkwood Ski resort; 8-11'. Heavenly; 5.5-8'. Horse Meadow, Tuolumne Watershed; 13'. Blackcap Basin, Kings; 8'. So the forecasted one-week amounts of 10 feet or more of snow are very likely to come to pass. Some places have that already, and our week is not up until Thursday.

Rainfall amounts were very high in some places. Storm total for Downtown Sacramento (since Thursday night) was 3.12". Peak 6-hour rain occurred at San Marcos Pass, with 6.10" from 00 - 06Z the 5th. That gauge in Santa Barbara Co. had 9" on Saturday, and stands at 10.95" for the month. Bates has a January total of 5.92" in Santa Barbara Co.

Opids Camp in L.A. Co. came in with 12.56" for this storm period.

Highest 24-hour Sierra total at a quick glance showed Poison Ridge, in Madera Co., el. 6,900' with 6.23" ending Saturday at 4am. Monthly precip totals (which are basically this 'storm' because not much happened the first 3 days of the month) include:

Oak Bottom, Shasta Co., el. 1,326'	10.02"
Drum Power House, Nevada Co. 3,400'	6.42"
Stateline 6,235'	3.60"
Mammoth Pass, Alpine Co., el. 9,500'	8.88"
Milo, Tulare Co., el. 2,002'	3.46"

A one-month statewide precip graph shows the crest and lee side of the Sierra seeing upwards of 400% of normal precip since Dec. 8. Most of CA has gotten about 150-200% of normal. For this great graphic, please go to the Western Region Climate Center at:

http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/anom/cal_anom.html

Scroll down to precip, and take your pick of variable and time frame.

Hydrologic impacts of the several days of wet weather include monitor stage being reached at Arcata along the Mad River, Tisdale Weir overflow to 1.5' on Saturday and Sunday (none occurred at Colusa), and Rio Vista made it to monitor stage twice due to the strong low, and gusty winds.

Additional north coast hydrologic numbers and impacts have been summarized by Sherry Constancio of the Eureka Flood Center (thanks!)

- Eel River at Fernbridge crested at 18.76, just below the 20-ft flood stage...at the 20-ft flood stage the western half of the Eel River Delta may be completely flooded, including the northwest areas of the community of Loleta
- Van Duzen at Grizzly Creek peaked just under Monitor Stage (13-ft) at 12.54.
- In Mendocino County, the Navarro River near Navarro peaked at 29.54-ft, well over its 23-foot Flood Stage. According to the NWS, some homes are flooded at 30-feet so this was a narrow margin and was closely monitored.
- Numerous power outages, including the entire city of Crescent City
- US Highway 101 between Crescent City and Klamath was closed briefly early Friday morning due to a downed tree
- State Route 36 was closed for awhile near Carlotta due to flooding
- Avenue of the Giants (along Hwy 101) was briefly closed due to a slide
- Snow levels dropped to 2000-ft and several inches covered Highway 299
- Localized flooding in lowland areas and the temporary closure of several county roads

May not post again till the 16th or 23rd of this month, due to several speaking and project obligations.

(EL)

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